



Police Communications

Shown in the accompanying photos is the communications center of the Oklahoma City Police Department (OCPD), whose display consoles bear some resemblance to those in the mission control facility at Johnson Space Center (JSC). The resemblance is more than coincidental. OCPD incorporated NASA technology in its computer-aided communications system and benefited from assistance provided by JSC.

JSC's Mission Control is a vital element in space operations and its efficient operation is as important to mission success as the spacecraft in orbit. Developed in 1960, Mission Control was provided entirely new, specially-designed communications, computing and





display systems which have been technologically updated over the years. In designing the facility, NASA paid particular attention to the human factors involved in ground management of long-duration space flights, for example, selection and training of control center personnel; most effective informational displays; and special lighting to reduce controller fatigue and eyestrain. For the benefit of potential users of this technology, NASA has conducted a number of seminars and workshops on control equipment and techniques.

When the Oklahoma City Police Department decided to develop a computerized communications system, OCPD sought assistance from Johnson Space Center. JSC officials reviewed the Oklahoma City plan, furnished information on lighting and other fatigue-reducing measures, and provided specifications for equipment and design layouts. JSC was particularly helpful in advising how to avoid communications bottlenecks associated with simultaneous handling of telephone, radio and inter-office transmissions. Use of already-developed NASA technology also saved Oklahoma City money in reduced design and engineering costs.

The photos show some of the main features of OCPD's highly efficient communications system. At upper left, the police officer in foreground, seated at a computer display console, is the dispatch coordinator; in the background are three other dispatchers at identical consoles. The officer (opposite) is the telecommunications coordinator, who handles internal calls from OCPD offices. Public calls for assistance are received by telephone clerks (above). Radio messages—incoming calls and dispatch transmissions—are handled separately by a radio communications coordinator (right).

